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Review of the Novorossiya Committee Activities (1801–03): Materials from the Russian State Historical Archive

Abstract

The article reviews the documents of the Novorossiya Committee stored in the Russian State Historical Archive (fond no. 1307). The Novorossiya Committee was established by Emperor Alexander I in 1801 to discuss and develop plans for optimal development of Novorossiya (New

Russia). The Committee included top officials of the time: V. P. Kochubei, N. P. Rumyantsev, G. R. Derzhavin, N. S. Mordvinov, P. A. Zubov, K. L. Hablitz, and others. The most important problems discussed at the meetings of the Novorossiya Committee included plans for administrative and territorial transformations in the region; ideas for improvement and development of Odessa (later implemented by I. O. Richelieu); settlement of land conflicts in the Crimea; general analysis of trade and economic projects for the development of the Crimea and other Circum-Pontic territories. The Novorossiya Committee and archive files from the said RGIA fond are cited in the historiography in a piecemeal manner. Having reviewed the activities of the Novorossiya Committee, the author underscores its significant influence on the transformations of the region in the reign of Alexander I. Many discussed initiatives and issues were implemented. A more detailed study of the Novorossiya Committee activities and its comparison with later established committees for the administration of Finland, the Crimea, and the Caucasus, Siberian, and Central Asian gubernias may provide a new look at principles of and approaches to the management of macro-regions and national outskirts of the Russian Empire in the reign of Alexander I.

Keywords

Emperor Alexander I, Novorossiya Committee, development of Novorossiya, Crimea, Odessa, archival sources.

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